



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Indian Head Rail Trail

Maryland



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Although located within easy reach of the Washington, D.C., metro area, the Indian Head Rail Trail in southern Maryland seems far removed from the hectic pace of urban life. The 13-mile paved rail trail travels alongside creeks and through woods halfway across Charles County from the town of Indian Head on the Potomac River to the inland community of White Plains.

About the Route

The trail leaves off in the west from Mattingly Avenue near the gates of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, a facility that got its start in 1890 as a weapons base. The town of Indian Head grew up around the base and was incorporated in 1920. Local leaders say the town's name is most likely derived from the peninsula where the town

sits (known as the Indian Headlands) and the Algonquian peoples who once lived here. The area's Indigenous community has petitioned for the name to be changed, however, asserting that it alludes to violence inflicted on them in years past.

There's no parking at the trailhead on Mattingly Way. Trail users can park at Charlie Wright Park or Village Green Park, about 0.3 miles north of the trailhead, and follow signs across Indian Head Highway/MD 210 to the trailhead.

Heading eastward, the trail leaves the town and passes a wide-open view of the wetlands surrounding Mattawoman Creek, a tributary of the Potomac River, and a productive breeding estuary for migratory fish. The trail also passes two other tributaries, Old Woman Run and Tobacco Creek, as well as three wildlife management and environmental areas. Sharp-eyed visitors may spot wild turkeys, deer, herons, bald eagles, egrets, and a variety of waterfowl from the trail. Bird watchers have identified nearly 150 different species of birds along the corridor.

The trail makes a flat and often straight run to White Plains on a 10-foot-wide paved path with grassy shoulders regularly maintained by the county. The route passes by a lily pond at Bumpy Oak Road about 5.5 miles out from Indian Head, but most of the route is bordered by forests and farmland. Except for parking at crossroads and occasional portable toilets, there are no services (such as food) until the trail reaches its eastern end in White Plains, where there is parking at the trailhead.

Trail History

The Indian Head Rail Trail follows a former railroad line built in 1918 to transport supplies to the U.S. Navy's weapons facility built on the Indian Head peninsula overlooking the Potomac River. The facility, whose name and mission have changed over the years, still exists, but the railroad corridor is no



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States: Maryland

Counties: Charles

Length: 12.9miles

Trail end points: 27 Mattingly Ave (Indian Head) to 10395 Theodore Green Blvd (White Plains)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Walking,Wheelchair Accessible,Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Indian Head Rail Trail runs between 27 Mattingly Ave (Indian Head) and 10395 Theodore Green Blvd (White Plains), which offers parking.

Parking is also available at:

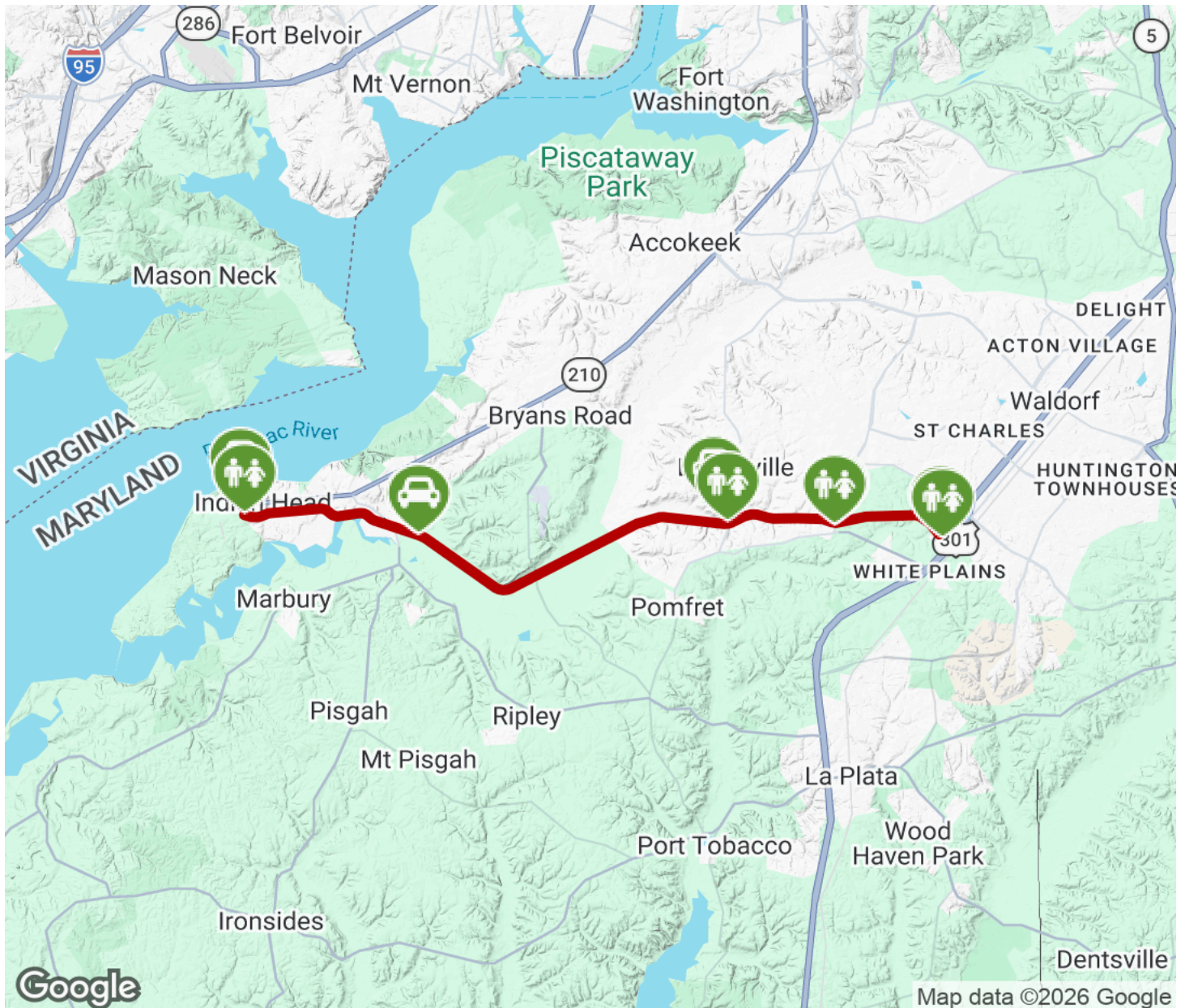
- Bensville Park, 6980 Bensville Rd (White Plains)
- 4450 Indian Head Rail Trail (White Plains)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Indian Head Rail Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com